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Sustainable development: report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Ms. Denise **McQuade** (Ireland)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 53 (see A/64/420). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 34th and 41st meetings, on 12 November and 9 December 2009. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/64/SR.34 and 41).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/64/L.30 and A/C.2/64/L.65

2. At the 34th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of the Sudan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session" (A/C.2/64/L.30), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
>
> "*Recalling* its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005, 61/205 of 20 December 2006, 62/195 of 19 December 2007 and 63/220 of 19 December 2008,

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 10 parts, under the symbol A/64/420 and Add.1-9.

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"*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Taking into account* Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Recalling* the Outcome of the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development,

"*Reaffirming* the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority and principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries,

"*Recognizing* the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need, including through the ongoing informal consultative process on the institutional framework for United Nations environmental activities,

"*Also recognizing* that the current global crises could adversely impact sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and emphasizing the need for the mobilization of adequate funding to address their environmental aspects,

"*Reiterating* that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries, in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"*Taking note* of the report of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit entitled 'Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system',

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session and the decisions contained therein;

"2. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts to shift emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work;

"3. *Also welcomes* the decision to mainstream the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building as an integral part of the United Nations Environment Programme's Medium-term Strategy for the period 2010-2013, and stresses the need to advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan with a view to achieving its objectives in the areas of capacity-building and technology support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

"4. *Calls upon* Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;

"5. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the eleventh special session of the Governing Council/Global

Ministerial Environment Forum to be held from 24 to 26 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia;

"6. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening of the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources, and in this respect emphasizes the importance of building on the experiences gained from the preparation of different global environmental assessments as well as other relevant developments in this field;

"7. *Reiterates* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to conduct comprehensive, integrated and scientifically credible global environment assessments, in close consultation with Member States, in order to support decision-making processes at all levels, in the light of the continuing need for up-to-date, scientifically credible, policy-relevant information on environmental change worldwide and in this regard, encourages the Programme to undertake a comprehensive integrated global assessment, leading to the preparation of the fifth report in the Global Environment Outlook series, which should inform, as appropriate, the strategic directions of the United Nations Environment Programme;

"8. *Requests* relevant United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and invites the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements, to mainstream the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building in their operational activities at country level, with a view to promoting, supporting and facilitating its implementation;

"9. *Stresses* that the financial and economic crisis must not delay the necessary global response to climate change and environmental degradation, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;

"10. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to deepen its cooperation with related United Nations agencies, regions, subregions and existing South-South cooperation initiatives to develop joint activities and synergies of capacity in advancing South-South cooperation in support of capacity-building and technology support in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan and as reflected in the Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013;

"11. *Reiterates* its invitation to Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

"12. *Also reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all the administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

"13. *Further reiterates* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the

Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

"14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session, under the item entitled 'Sustainable development', a sub-item entitled 'Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its eleventh special session'."

3. At its 41st meeting, on 9 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session" (A/C.2/64/L.65), submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.30.

4. At the same meeting, upon the proposal of the Chairperson, the Committee agreed to waive rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.65.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of programme budget implications with regard to draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.65.

6. Also at its 41st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.65 (see para. 8).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.65, draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.30 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005, 61/205 of 20 December 2006, 62/195 of 19 December 2007 and 63/220 of 19 December 2008,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[1]

Taking into account Agenda 21[2] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[3]

Reaffirming the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority and principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries,

Taking note of United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council decision 25/4 of February 2009,[4] by which the Governing Council established a consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives, with the purpose of preparing a set of options for improving international environmental governance for the consideration of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, with a view to providing inputs to the United Nations General Assembly,

Taking note also of the developments in the area of global efforts in relation to chemicals management, including the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, and the preparations for the negotiations on the global legally binding instrument on mercury,

Reiterating that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

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[1] See resolution 60/1.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/64/25), annex I.

Taking note of the report of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system",[5] and the note by the Secretary-General thereon,[6]

Taking note also of United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council decision 25/10 on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services,[4]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session[7] and the decisions contained therein;[8]

2. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts, and encourages the further strengthening of efforts, to shift emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work, and, in this regard, takes note of the approval of the programme of work and the budget for the period 2010-2011;

3. *Underlines* the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building[9] with a view to achieving its objectives in the areas of capacity-building and technology support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and, in this regard, welcomes the decision to mainstream the Bali Strategic Plan as an integral part of the United Nations Environment Programme's medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013, invites relevant United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies and multilateral environmental agreements to consider mainstreaming the Bali Strategic Plan in their overall activities, and calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan;

4. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to deepen its cooperation with related United Nations agencies, regions, subregions and existing South-South cooperation initiatives to develop joint activities and synergies of capacity in advancing South-South cooperation in support of capacity-building and technology support in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan and as reflected in the medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, particularly through its Quick Start Programme, and invites Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to engage actively and cooperate closely to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, including by providing adequate resources;

6. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the eleventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum from 24 to 26 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia;

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[5] JIU/REP/2008/3.

[6] See A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1.

[7] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/64/25).

[8] Ibid., annex I.

[9] See UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

7. *Welcomes* the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to hold a simultaneous extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties on 22 and 23 February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia, immediately before the eleventh special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum;

8. *Reaffirms* the need, while recognizing the efforts and actions taken, to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources, and in this respect emphasizes the importance of building on the experiences gained from the preparation of different global environmental assessments as well as other relevant developments in this field;

9. *Recognizes* the global challenges posed by mercury, and, in this regard, takes note of the decision of the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee with the mandate to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury;[10]

10. *Reiterates* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to conduct comprehensive, integrated and scientifically credible global environment assessments, in close consultation with Member States, in order to support decision-making processes at all levels, in the light of the continuing need for up-to-date, scientifically credible, policy-relevant information on environmental change worldwide and, in this regard, encourages the Programme to undertake a comprehensive integrated global assessment, leading to the preparation of the fifth report in the Global Environment Outlook series,[11] which should inform, as appropriate, the strategic directions of the United Nations Environment Programme;

11. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and to enhance the cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and regional and subregional organizations, and welcomes the continued active participation of the Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group, as well as in the United Nations Delivering as One exercise at the country level;

12. *Welcomes* the increased contributions to the Environment Fund, and reiterates its invitation to Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

13. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), which underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all the administrative and management costs of the United Nations Environment Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

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[10] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/64/25), annex I, decision 25/5.

[11] Ibid., decision 25/2.

14. *Also reiterates* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its eleventh special session".